

## Message Text

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44

ACTION OES-05

INFO OCT-01 EA-07 ERDA-05 ERDE-00 ACDA-05 CIAE-00 INR-07

IO-11 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 EB-07 NRC-05 FEAE-00

DODE-00 ISO-00 AID-05 CEA-01 CIEP-01 COME-00 FPC-01

H-02 INT-05 OMB-01 PM-04 USIA-06 SAM-01 SP-02 SS-15

STR-04 TRSE-00 /109 W

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P 100800Z MAR 76

FM AMCONSUL FUKUOKA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 541

AMEMBASSY TOKYO JA PRIORITY

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TAGS: TGEN, PINT, ENRG, JA E.O. 11652: N/A

SUBJ: ANOTHER RADIOACTIVE LEAK AT NUCLEAR-POWERED ELECTRIC  
GENERATING PLANT

REF: (A) 75 FUKUOKA A-04

(B) 75 FUKUOKA 073

ON THE AFTERNOON OF MARCH 9, A MINOR RADIOACTIVE LEAK OCCURRED  
AT KYUSHU ELECTRIC'S GENKAI NUMBER ONE NUCLEAR POWER PLANT NEAR  
KARATSU, SAGA PREFECTURE. THOUGH THE LEAK ITSELF WAS MINOR  
(.5 CURIES OVER A PERIOD OF FIVE MINUTES), AND WAS CAUSED BY  
SIMPLE CARELESSNESS OF A WORKER WHO FORGOT TO TIGHTEN A VALVE,  
THE TIMING AND PRESS COVERAGE ARE VERY BAD FOR KYUSHU ELECTRIC.

PAGE 02 RUADLTA7483 C O N F I D E N T I A L

WE HAVE REPORTED OVER THE PAST COUPLE OF YEARS HOW LOCAL OPINION  
HAS SWITCHED FROM WELCOMING A NUCLEAR POWER PLANT TO ACTIVE  
OPPOSITION IN SENDAI, KAGOSHIMA PREFECTURE, AND HOW LEAKAGE AT  
THE GENKAI PLANT IN JUNE OF LAST YEAR HAS STIFFENED LOCAL OPPO-  
SITION (REF B). YESTERDAY'S LEAK WILL PROBABLY CAUSE CONSIDERABLY  
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MORE TO NEW CONSTRUCTION. PRESS COVERAGE OF THE LEAK WAS HEAVY,

AND EDITORIAL COMMENT WAS TYPIFIED BY YOMIURI, WHICH COMMENTED:  
"ANOTHER ACCIDENT TOOK PLACE LESS THAN A YEAR AFTER A LEAK CAUSED  
BY METAL FAILURE. EVEN THOUGH THE LEAK WAS SMALL, A SERIES OF  
ACCIDENTS WILL CAUSE DISTRUST OF ATOMIC POWER." KYUSHU ELECTRIC'S  
PRESIDENT IMMEDIATELY STATED THAT THE LEAKAGE HAD BEEN ACCIDENTAL  
AND WAS IN ANY CASE NOT IMPORTANT. HOWEVER, THE LOCAL ASAHI  
POINTED OUT THAT THE ELECTRIC DEVELOPMENT ADJUSTMENT COUNCIL  
(DENGEN KAIHATSU CHOSEI SHINGIKAI), CHAIRED BY THE PRIME MINISTER,  
IS TO MEET THIS MONTH AND WAS TO CONSIDER APPROVAL OF KYUSHU  
ELECTRIC'S APPLICATION TO BUILD THE SENDAI PLANT. ASAHI SAID THAT  
ACCIDENT MIGHT DEFER APPROVAL AND RE-KINDLE LOCAL OPPOSITION TO  
CONSTRUCTION.

COMMENT: OUR FINAL SENTENCE IN A-04 OF LAST JANUARY WAS "IN VIEW  
OF THE DIFFICULTIES THEY (KYUSHU ELECTRIC) HAVE FACED SO FAR AND

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THE MUTSU PROBLEMS, ANY SORT OF ACCIDENT WOULD MAKE THEIR NUCLEAR  
POWER PLANT DEVELOPMENT EXTREMELY DIFFICULT." THIS PREDICTION  
SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN AMPLY BORNE OUT BY NOT ONE, BUT TWO LEAKS.  
PRINCIPAL OFFICER VISITED GENKAI PLANT LAST MONTH AND WAS TOLD BY  
MANAGER THAT FIRST LEAK HAD CAUSED GREAT DEAL OF TROUBLE AND COST  
KYUSHU ELECTRIC CONSIDERABLE MONEY. HE SAID THAT MEASURES HAD  
BEEN TAKEN TO INSURE THAT NO FURTHER ACCIDENTS COULD POSSIBLY  
OCCUR, SINCE THE PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPACT WOULD BE SO GREAT. ALTHOUGH  
IT IS TOO SOON TO MAKE DEFINITIVE STATEMENT, WE PREDICT THAT  
LATEST RADIOACTIVE LEAK WILL BE REAL SET-BACK FOR KYUSHU ELECTRIC'S  
PLANNED CONSTRUCTION OF NUCLEAR-POWERED GENERATING PLANTS. IT ALSO  
SEEMS POSSIBLE THAT ADVERSE EFFECTS WILL NOT BE CONFINED TO  
SHORT RUN. END COMMENT.

RICHARDSON

GDS-82

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** PRESS COMMENTS, RADIOACTIVE WASTES, NUCLEAR POWER PLANTS, NUCLEAR REACTORS  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 10 MAR 1976  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** BoyleJA  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1976FUKUOK07483  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** N/A  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Film Number:** D760094-0601  
**From:** FUKUOKA  
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Image Path:**  
**ISecure:** 1  
**Legacy Key:** link1976/newtext/t19760377/aaaacplh.tel  
**Line Count:** 94  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM  
**Office:** ACTION OES  
**Original Classification:** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 2  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Previous Classification:** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** 76 FUKUOKA A-4  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** BoyleJA  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 26 MAY 2004  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <26 MAY 2004 by ellisoob>; APPROVED <21 SEP 2004 by BoyleJA>  
**Review Markings:**

Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
04 MAY 2006

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** ANOTHER RADIOACTIVE LEAK AT NUCLEAR-POWERED ELECTRIC GENERATING PLANT  
**TAGS:** TGEN, PINT, ENRG, JA  
**To:** STATE TOKYO  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006